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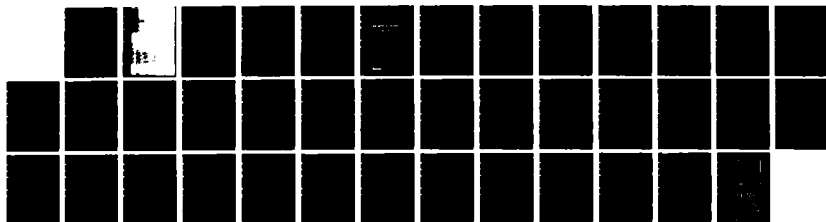   CORP SANTA MONICA CA B M JENKINS NOV 85 RAND/R-3302-AF
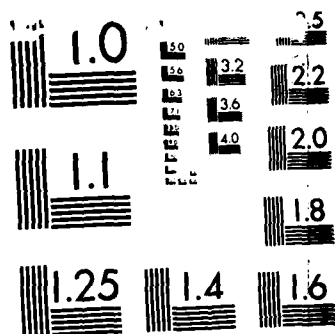
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Terrorism is the use of criminal violence
to force a government to change its course
of action, usually to withdraw from or
desist from undertaking something. It puts
pressure on a government both directly
through overt threats and actions, and
indirectly through instilling fear in the
population. In general, terrorists prefer
to target people rather than installations
and often choreograph their actions to
attract media attention. It is difficult
to defend against terrorists, because their
objectives are often outside the defender's
control, and because they always have the
advantage of surprise. The prevention of
terrorist attacks requires an understanding
and awareness of this unconventional type
of warfare, knowledge of past terrorist
tactics, methods, motivations, and modus
operandi, which in turn requires special
intelligence operations and heavy reliance
on advanced defensive technology.
Retaliation operations are hampered by the
elusive nature of the adversary and the
inevitable collocation of innocent
civilians. Terrorists have always done
less damage on the whole than tthey must be
considered capable of. For the near
future, the antiterrorist mission of the
Air Force will be to deal with terrorism at
lower levels.

R-3302-AF

International Terrorism

The Other World War

Brian M. Jenkins

November 1985

A Project AIR FORCE report
prepared for the
United States Air Force

PREFACE

This report was prepared under the Project AIR FORCE study effort "Implications of Terrorism for the Air Force." It is intended to serve as a primer for Air Force officers who must gain a basic understanding of the phenomenon of terrorism. The report addresses numerous issues touching on the definition, theory, tactics, targets, and effects of terrorism, and the threat that terrorism poses to the U.S. Air Force. The Air Force plays two separate roles with regard to international terrorism: It is a potential target of terrorist actions, and it is a potential instrument of preemptive retaliation. To be adequately prepared for either role requires extensive preparations based on a clearer understanding of the terrorist threat.

The author wishes to acknowledge the substantive comments and helpful suggestions of Colonel A. Gropman and Lieutenant Colonel August G. Jannarone (USAF), and those of Milton G. Weiner of the Rand staff.

SUMMARY

Modern-day terrorism has proven to be almost as difficult to define as it is to counteract. Despite the confusion that surrounds the concept and the violence that it produces, however, we can provide at least a working definition: Terrorism is the use of criminal violence to force a government to change its course of action. The terrorist purpose is usually inhibitive, i.e., to force a government to withdraw from or desist from undertaking something. Terrorist violence puts pressure on a government both directly through overt threats and actions, and indirectly through instilling fear in the population.

In general, terrorists prefer to target people rather than installations. Even though both categories have symbolic value, the killing or kidnapping of individuals is a more dramatic "force multiplier" than the bombing of buildings or even airplanes. Terrorist attacks are often carefully choreographed to attract the attention of the media. The victims themselves may mean nothing to the terrorists—terrorism is aimed at the people watching, not the targets.

Terrorism is a political crime. It is always a crime, despite the claims of some that "one man's freedom fighters are another's terrorists." The terrorist pursues different aims and uses different methods than those who legitimately call themselves freedom fighters.

Terrorism cannot be "defeated" in the way an enemy can be defeated in war, i.e., terrorists cannot be forced to cease operations altogether or be made to disappear as an adversarial force. All defensive efforts must therefore be directed toward preventing as many terrorist incidents as possible, and to limiting whatever damage they may inflict. Because terrorist attacks are unconventional and varied, an effective counterterrorism campaign requires additions and extensions to existing bodies of doctrine.

It is difficult to *defend* against terrorists, partly because their objectives are often outside the defender's control. For example, a terrorist attack against an Air Force installation will attain worldwide publicity and political effect even if it is successfully repulsed. However, the biggest problem in defending against terrorism is that terrorist attacks always have the advantage of surprise. Even if the defenders expect some sort of action, they cannot predict the type, extent, timing, or precise locale of the attack.

The *prevention* of terrorist attacks requires, first of all, an understanding and awareness of this unconventional type of warfare. It also requires knowledge of past terrorist tactics, methods, motivations, and

modus operandi. This in turn requires special intelligence operations and heavy reliance on advanced defensive technology. These countermeasures may add greatly to the expense of maintaining the Air Force presence at home and abroad, but they are essential.

Finally, even when terrorist targets have been identified with reasonable confidence, *retaliation* operations are hampered by the elusive nature of the adversary and the inevitable collocation of innocent civilians. Surgical strikes may often be impossible. Moreover, past patterns of terrorist activity indicate that even locally effective retaliation neither deters nor incapacitates terrorist groups. On the contrary, ill-considered counterattack can increase the terrorists' resolve and swell their reservoir of potential recruits. This does not mean, of course, that preemptive or retaliatory strikes should never be employed.

State sponsorship of terrorism adds a new dimension to the terrorist threat. It represents escalation, in that state-supported terrorists have greater resources of every kind—weapons, connections, mobility, information, recruits—yet states using terrorist assaults on U.S. assets also run a greater risk, as they can be more easily identified than small groups operating independently.

Terrorists have always done less damage on the whole than they must be regarded as capable of. They are restrained by a variety of considerations that are likely to restrain them in the future as well, particularly in the use of weapons of mass destruction. Moreover, terrorists have historically shown a lack of innovation. However, there are many different types of terrorists, following different ideologies, and it cannot be assumed that all groups will necessarily shy away from increasingly violent incidents.

Tougher action against terrorists, whether it takes the form of refusing their demands in hostage situations or hunting them down, has often led to an increase in activity, which may also have occurred at certain times due to the loss of popular local sympathies. Defenders should not abstain from acting against terrorists for fear of escalation, but they must be aware of the possibility. It does not appear likely that such escalation will go so far as to bring nuclear weapons into play, but the directions that may be taken, particularly by state-sponsored terrorists, are subject to a myriad of unforeseeable factors. In any event, for the near future, the antiterrorist mission of the Air Force will be to deal with terrorism at lower levels.

CONTENTS

INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM: THE OTHER WORLD WAR

"The Third World War has started," the notorious terrorist Carlos told his hostages in Vienna in 1975. A French soldier in Beirut, a survivor of the suicide terrorist bombing that killed 58 of his comrades, made a similar observation: "Our 58 comrades are perhaps the first deaths of the Third World War." Unlike the wars of the past, this war did not begin with one identifiable event. Indeed, no one can say for certain when or where it began.

It is not the war the United States military has trained for. There are no massed armor formations pouring across a central front, no divisions on the march, no scramble of fighter aircraft. It is, rather, a hundred wars waged by elusive and ruthless foes. They operate under diverse banners: the Red Army Faction, the Red Brigades, the Armed Forces of National Liberation, the Revolutionary Armed Forces, the Revolutionary Army of the People, the Popular Front, the Holy War.

It is a conflict for which we are inadequately prepared, according to a distinguished panel of generals—and we have not done well. Our embassies have been destroyed, our citizens have been kidnapped and killed, our jet fighters have been blown up on the ground. Our attempt to rescue fellow countrymen held hostage in Iran ended in failure, with eight dead rescuers left behind in the burning wreckage of their aircraft. Our military headquarters have been damaged by bombs. Caught off guard, 241 U.S. Marines died when a single suicidal fanatic drove his explosives-laden truck into their barracks. A time bomb injured more than 50 of our military men at a cafe near their base in a foreign city.

If our losses are numerically small compared to those suffered in more conventional combat, they are nevertheless symbolically and politically significant. Terrorists have altered our foreign policy. They have affected our ability to implement policy. They have demonstrated the difficulties we have in striking back. They have compelled us to divert increasing resources to protect ourselves and our facilities against their attacks. The Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of State, and even the President live behind concrete barriers, visible reminders of our vulnerability.

THE DEFINITION OF TERRORISM

When we talk about terrorism, what exactly are we talking about? How does terrorism differ from ordinary crime? Is all politically motivated violence terrorism? Is terrorism synonymous with guerrilla war, or is the term properly reserved for those trying to overthrow governments? Can governments also be terrorists? What is the distinction between driving a truck loaded with explosives into an embassy and dropping high explosives on a city? How do we make useful distinctions? Virtually all discussions about terrorism sooner or later wander into the swamp of definition.

The term "terrorism" has no precise or widely accepted definition. If it were a mere matter of description, establishing a definition would be simple: Terrorism is violence or the threat of violence calculated to create an atmosphere of fear and alarm—in a word, to terrorize—and thereby bring about some social or political change. This is pretty close to the definition offered by a South American jurist more than 20 years ago, i.e., terrorism consists of acts that in themselves may be classic forms of crime—murder, arson, the use of explosives—but that differ from classic crimes in that they are executed "with the deliberate intention of causing panic, disorder, and terror within an organized society."[1]

But while this definition puts terrorism in the realm of crime, we live in a world that recognizes the legitimacy of war and the right of revolution. At the turn of the century, socialist revolutionaries in Russia were proud to call themselves terrorists. They had a terrorist arm called appropriately the Terrorist Brigade, and they hoped through selective assassination to inspire terror among Russia's ruling elite. They were careful not to injure bystanders, and if their intended victim was accompanied by members of his family, they would abort their attack. Ironically, today's terrorists are less fastidious about their actions and more concerned about their public image. In the age of mass media, *terrorism* has become a pejorative term. Terrorists now call themselves anything but terrorists.

Nobody is a terrorist who "stands for a just cause," Yasir Arafat told the United Nations. If we accept Arafat's statement, the problem of definition is further complicated, since the validity of causes must be inserted into the criteria. As a result, only to the extent that everyone in the world can agree on the justice of a particular cause is there likely to be agreement that an action is or is not a terrorist action.

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[1] Inter-American Juridical Committee, "Statement of Reasons for the Draft Convention on Terrorism and Kidnapping," October 5, 1970, O.A.S. Document CP/doc. 54/70, rev. 1, November 4, 1970, quoting Eduardo Jimenez Arechaga in a study published in *Anuario Uruguayo de Derecho Internacional*, 1962.

Some governments are prone to label as terrorism all violent acts committed by their political opponents, while antigovernment extremists frequently claim to be the victims of government terror. Use of the term thus implies a moral judgment. If one group can successfully attach the label *terrorist* to its opponent, then it has indirectly persuaded others to adopt its moral and political point of view, or at least to reject the terrorists' view. Terrorism is what the bad guys do. This drawing of boundaries between what is legitimate and what is illegitimate, between the *right* way to fight and the *wrong* way to fight, brings high political stakes to the task of definition.

Terrorism in recent years has become a fad word that is promiscuously applied to a variety of violent acts which are not necessarily intended to produce terror. It is important to distinguish between actions that are intended to terrorize and actions that just happen to terrify. Muggers may terrify the population of a large urban area, but they produce terror as a by-product of their crimes; their objectives are wallets and watches, not alarm.

The difficulty in defining terrorism has led to the cliché that one man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter. The phrase implies that there can be no objective definition of terrorism, that there are no universal standards of conduct in conflict. However, civilized nations have through law identified modes of conduct that are criminal. Homicide, kidnapping, threats to life, and the willful destruction of property appear in the criminal codes of every country. True, some of the prohibitions may legally be violated in times of war—the law against killing, for example, may be violated by those we call "lawful combatants." Terrorists claim to be not criminals, but soldiers at war who are therefore privileged to break ordinary laws. But even in war, there are rules that outlaw the use of certain weapons and tactics.

The rules of war grant civilian combatants who are not associated with "valid" targets at least theoretical immunity from deliberate attack. They prohibit taking hostages. They prohibit violence against those held captive. They define belligerents. They define neutral territory. These rules are sometimes violated—and in these cases, those responsible for the violations become war criminals. But violations in no way diminish the validity of the rules.

Some international lawyers see the laws of war as a possible solution to the dilemma of definition. They suggest that rather than trying to negotiate new treaties on terrorism which are not likely to be ratified or enforced, nations should apply the laws of war, to which almost all have agreed. Terrorists, they say, should be dealt with as soldiers who commit atrocities. Nearly all countries have agreed to try or extradite soldiers who commit atrocities in international armed conflicts. Why

should persons not explicitly granted soldiers' status be given greater leeway to commit violence than soldiers have? Under the laws-of-war approach, terrorism would comprise all acts committed in peacetime that, if committed during war, would constitute war crimes.

Terrorism can be objectively defined by the quality of the act, but not by the identity of the perpetrators or the nature of their cause. All terrorist acts are crimes, and many would also be war crimes or "grave breaches" of the rules of war if we accepted the terrorists' assertion that they wage war. All involve violence or the threat of violence, sometimes coupled with explicit demands. The violence is frequently directed against civilian targets. The purposes are political. The actions are often carried out in a way that will achieve maximum publicity. The perpetrators are usually members of an organized group. Their organizations are by necessity clandestine, but unlike other criminals, terrorists often claim credit for their acts. And finally—the hallmark of terrorism—the acts are intended to produce psychological effects beyond the immediate physical damage.

While these criteria do not eliminate all ambiguity, they enable us to draw some limits and answer some of the questions. Terrorism differs from ordinary crime in its political purpose and in its primary objective. Neither the ordinary bank robber nor the man who shot President Reagan is a terrorist. Likewise, not all politically motivated violence is terrorism. The Minuteman of the American Revolution and the rebel in Central America both have political motives, but they are not automatically terrorists. Terrorism is not synonymous with guerrilla war or any other kind of war, and it is not reserved exclusively for those trying to overthrow governments. The leftist assassin and the right-wing death squad secretly working under the direction of a Ministry of Interior both use the same tactics for the same purpose—to instill fear and alter a political situation.

DIFFERING CONCEPTS OF CONFLICT

International terrorism comprises those terrorist incidents that have clear international consequences: incidents in which terrorists go abroad to strike their targets, stay at home but select victims because of their connections to a foreign state (e.g., diplomats or the executives of foreign corporations), or attack international lines of commerce (e.g., airliners). It excludes the considerable amount of terrorist violence carried out by terrorists operating within their own country against their own nationals and in many countries by governments against their own citizens. For example, Irish terrorists blowing up other

Irishmen in Belfast would not be counted as international terrorists, nor would Italian terrorists kidnapping Italian officials in Italy.

This definition of international terrorism reflects the particular concern of the United States and the handful of other governments frequently targeted by terrorists abroad. The issue here is not the general problem of political violence or terrorism, or the causes of the conflicts that give rise to terrorist violence. These are domestic matters. The unit of measure is the spillover of this violence into the international domain. But why, terrorists might ask, should they play by the established rules of diplomacy and war when these rules were contrived by a small group of primarily Western nations for their own advantage, and when they deprive groups without recognized governments, territory, or armies from exercising their "right" to resort to violence?

The terrorists of today see no essential difference between the local authority they fight against and the diplomatic and commercial representatives of foreign powers. All terrorists, from the urban guerrillas in South America to the Palestinian fighters in the Middle East, have incorporated the Marxist concept of imperialism. It has become an article of faith in Third World thinking. The banker in Manhattan, the embassy in Montevideo, the local subsidiary of the multinational corporation, the President in his office are all links in a chain of economic exploitation and political repression. It is a concept shared also by the "irregulars" in North America, Western Europe, and Japan who consider themselves to be the auxiliary forces of a Third World revolution.

Many Third World governments, particularly those in Africa and Asia, do not always cooperate with American and European efforts to identify and combat international terrorism, not because these governments approve of terrorist tactics, but because they see the antiterrorist efforts as part of a broader campaign aimed at outlawing the irregular methods of warfare that were developed in the Third World during the civil war in China and the anticolonial struggles in Asia and Africa. Not a few of the Third World's insurgent chiefs—and today's leaders—were once called terrorists themselves. Their governments, particularly the ones that lack the tools of modern conventional war, therefore deliberately exclude from their definition of terrorism other means of struggle—"wars of liberation," or guerrilla warfare—which they once employed or which are now being employed on behalf of causes they support.

The position on international terrorism taken by the Third World governments is consistent with the position they took at the Geneva negotiations to revise the laws of war.[2] There, they sought to extend the rights and protections of the original Geneva Conventions to irregular forces as well as regular soldiers in international wars. They noted that the Geneva Conventions and other treaties regulating war had been drafted by Europeans to regulate warfare among Europeans, but that they omitted from "international warfare" military force used by the Europeans in gaining and maintaining colonies. In other words, when Europeans shot at Europeans, it was a closely regulated affair, but when Europeans shot at Africans or Asians, they could do what they wanted. The Third World governments feared that the Americans and Europeans now wanted to brand the irregular methods used by the natives to fight back as "terrorism" and thereby outlaw them.

Their rejection of this unequal state of affairs was reflected in the long-winded definition of international terrorism proposed by a group of nonaligned nations in 1973, which included "acts of violence and other repressive acts by colonial, racist and alien regimes against peoples struggling for their liberation . . . ; tolerating or assisting by a State the organizations of the remnants of fascists or mercenary groups whose terrorist activity is directed against other sovereign countries; acts of violence committed by individuals or groups of individuals which endanger or take innocent human lives or jeopardize fundamental freedoms, [provided this definition does] not affect the inalienable rights to self-determination and independence of all peoples under colonial and racist regimes and other forms of alien domination."[3]

It must be remembered that this debate about what constitutes international terrorism originally began in the early 1970s, when guerrilla armies still fought for independence in Portuguese Angola and Mozambique, against white supremacist governments in Rhodesia and South Africa, for "national liberation" in Indochina, and for the recovery of a Palestinian homeland in the Middle East—causes which evoked considerable support in the Third World.

Even though governments have not been able to agree on a common definition of terrorism, they have achieved a modest degree of cooperation in dealing with certain aspects of the problem. This has been attained by avoiding definition altogether and identifying specific

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[2]Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and Relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts (Protocol I), adopted by consensus of Diplomatic Conference in Geneva on June 8, 1977.

[3]United Nations, General Assembly, *Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on International Terrorism, General Assembly Official Records: 28th Session*, Supplement No. 28 (A/9028), 1973, p. 22.

terrorist tactics that concern all nations. For example, most nations have signed and generally have abided by the various international conventions against hijacking and sabotage of aircraft. Not surprisingly, the world's diplomats have been able to agree that diplomats should not be targets of terrorist violence and have signed the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Crimes Against Internationally Protected Persons.[4] A broader degree of cooperation has been achieved in smaller international forums, such as the Summit Seven or the European Economic Community, where political consensus is more easily reached.

THE THEORY OF TERRORISM: AIMED AT THE PEOPLE WATCHING

Present-day terrorism derives largely from twentieth century theories of guerrilla warfare, for which Mao Zedong deserves the most credit, although his paramount concern for winning the support of the masses would probably have made him reject the tactics of contemporary terrorism. During the civil war in China, Mao formulated a series of relationships that differed both from conventional military strategies and from earlier Marxist theories of revolution. He placed greater emphasis on military power than the earlier Marxists did. They relied primarily on political organization, seeing the military portion of the revolution as a final assault on government buildings. This had not worked in China. Mao had to wage a long war, but because his forces were numerically and technologically inferior to those of his opponents, he had to substitute political power for conventional military power. With superior political motivation, Mao reasoned, guerrillas strengthened by the support of the Chinese peasants could survive military reverses and wage a protracted military campaign that would wear down their opponents.

Mao's concept of a "people's war," elaborated in the insurgent movements of the 1950s and 1960s, freed strategists from thinking about warfare exclusively in terms of more soldiers and better armaments. It allowed determined revolutionaries who lacked conventional military power to take on militarily superior forces, with some hope of ultimately defeating them. Perhaps it accorded too much weight to political motivation and determination—both very subjective factors—because it has convinced later revolutionaries that a few pistols and their own political convictions (which they always judge superior to everyone else's) could guarantee them eventual victory.

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[4]Protocol I, op. cit.

Mao suggested that guerrillas must aim for and depend upon the political mobilization of people who are mere bystanders in a conventional military conflict. Mao thus introduced a relationship between military action and the attitude and response of the audience. This added a new dimension to armed conflict: Instead of gauging success primarily in terms of the physical effect that military action had on the enemy, strategists could now say that the effect a violent action has on the people watching may be independent of, and may equal or even exceed in importance the actual physical damage inflicted on the foe. Terrorism is that proposition pursued to its most violent extreme, though terrorists have not been very good at explaining it.

"Political power grows from the barrel of a gun," wrote Mao, a phrase contemporary terrorists are fond of repeating. Their own thinking apparently stops at the muzzle. In recent years, terrorists have turned out thousands of pages of manifestos, manuals, assessments, directives, claims, communiqués, commentaries, critiques, and self-criticisms, but they have yet to articulate a clear and convincing theory to explain just how laying a bomb here or pulling a trigger there relates to the achievement of their objectives. What emerges from this vast body of angry literature are declarations, slogans, exhortations, unjustified assumptions, unproved assertions, and generally poor analysis. Carlos Marighella's *Mini Manual of the Urban Guerrilla*, which is supposed to have inspired and instructed the first generation of terrorists in Latin America and Western Europe, offers at best a discussion of terrorist tactics.[5] (Marighella, a renegade from the Brazilian Communist party, died in a gun battle with Brazilian police—hardly a model of success to be emulated.) Today's terrorists offer no theory, no doctrine, no strategy, not even an inspiring vision of the future.

Most outsiders find it difficult to understand how the killing of Olympic athletes in Munich or the hijacking of an airliner in Rome is supposed to ease the plight of Palestinians in the Middle East, or how blowing up an office in Manhattan will help topple a dictator in Latin America. And terrorists themselves may argue with each other over whether a particular action helps or hurts their cause. Some terrorist attacks may appear to be random or directed against targets that are not directly related to the terrorists' cause. For this reason, terrorist acts are often dismissed as *mindless* violence, *senseless* violence, or *irrational* violence; but terrorism is seldom mindless or irrational.

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[5] Carlos Marighella, *Mini Manual of the Urban Guerrilla*, reprinted in Jay Mallin (ed.), *Terror and Urban Guerrillas*, University of Miami Press, Coral Gables, Florida, 1971, pp. 70–115.

If it is not mindless, terrorism must have purpose—but what? To answer that question, we must try to think like terrorists and see beyond the apparent meaninglessness—sometimes even the tragic absurdity—of a single terrorist act, to discern its objectives.

The objectives of terrorism are not those of conventional combat. Terrorists do not try to take and hold ground or physically destroy their opponent's forces. They usually lack the kind of power needed to pursue such goals. Instead, terrorists attempt by their acts to inspire and manipulate fear, for a variety of purposes.

Terrorism may be aimed at gaining publicity. Terrorists hope that dramatic and shocking incidents of violence will attract attention to their cause and make them appear to be a force to be reckoned with. The atmosphere of fear and alarm they create frequently causes people to exaggerate the importance of the terrorists' cause and the strength of their forces and their movement. Because most terrorist groups are small and weak, the violence they carry out must be 'all the more dramatic and deliberately shocking.

Terrorist attacks are often carefully choreographed to attract the attention of the electronic media and the international press. The victims themselves often mean nothing to the terrorists. Terrorism is aimed at the people watching, not at the actual victims. Terrorism is theater.

Individual acts of terrorism also may be aimed at extracting specific concessions, such as the payment of ransom, the release of prisoners, or the publication of a terrorist message. Terrorists often seek to improve their bargaining power by creating a dramatic hostage situation that might coerce a government into meeting their demands.

The seizure of Israeli athletes at the 1972 Munich Olympiad had two objectives: publicity and concessions. The terrorists demanded that the government of Israel release a number of their imprisoned comrades. Israel rejected the demands, but the millions of people watching the Olympics on worldwide television guaranteed the terrorists the publicity they sought. Abu Iyad, the reputed architect of the attack, summarized the results: "The sacrifices made by the Munich heroes were not entirely in vain. They didn't bring about the liberation of any of their comrades imprisoned in Israel ... but they did obtain the operation's other two objectives: World opinion was forced to take note of the Palestinian drama, and the Palestinian people imposed their presence on an international gathering that had sought to exclude them."[6]

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[6]Abu Iyad, with Eric Rouleau, *My Home, My Land: A Narrative of the Palestinian Struggle*, Times Books, 1981.

Terrorism also may be aimed at causing widespread disorder, demoralizing society, and breaking down the existing social and political order. These objectives are typical of revolutionary, nihilistic, or anarchistic terrorists. Terrorists condemn society's normal rules and relationships as intolerable complacency. Dramatic acts of terrorism, they think, will awaken an army of potential supporters who slumber in apathy. If the benefits of political obedience are destroyed, if the complacency of uninvolvement is not allowed, if the government's inability to protect its citizens (which is the origin of and basic reason for the existence of government) is revealed, if there is no place to hide in the ensuing battle, if people are forced to choose sides, then, terrorists presume, the "people" will join the opponents of the government and a revolution will be carried out.

Impatient at the reluctance of the "people" to join them, terrorists may deliberately aim at provoking repression. In the terrorists' mind, the government, alarmed by continued terrorist attacks, will be compelled to strike back brutally, and perhaps blindly. The heavy hand of repression will fall upon the masses, whose discontent can then be mobilized by the terrorists.

This idea was colorfully expressed by the Basque terrorists who wrote, "The enemy, as a massive animal, stung by many bees, is infuriated to the point of uncontrollable rage, and strikes out blindly to the left and right—on every side. At this point we have achieved one of our major objectives, forcing him to commit a thousand atrocities and brutal acts. The majority of his victims are innocent. Then the people—to this point more or less passive and waiting—become indignant and in reaction turn to us. We could not hope for a better outcome."[7]

Another powerful motivation for terrorist actions is revenge. Small groups who have lost close comrades are particularly likely to strike back ferociously. A Puerto Rican separatist group detonated a bomb in a Wall Street restaurant in an obvious effort to cause casualties. The attack was in revenge for a bomb that was allegedly detonated by government authorities in a cafe frequented by separatists in Puerto Rico. Revenge becomes less important in larger organizations, where the deaths of comrades are accepted as losses in combat.

Finally, terrorism may be used to enforce obedience. This is the usual purpose of state or official terrorism, but terrorists themselves may also employ violence against their own members to discourage betrayal. The outcome desired is a prescribed pattern of behavior: obedience to the state or to the cause, and full cooperation in

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[7]U.S. Air Force, Office of Special Investigations.

identifying and rooting out infiltrators or enemies. In recent years, governments have extended their reach to émigrés and exiles, hiring terrorists or employing their own agents to attack foes of the regime in other countries. Libya openly avowed its campaign to murder "traitors living abroad" as a warning to all dissidents. Syria, Iran, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, and Romania have all been accused of killing defectors and troublesome exiles in Western Europe.

The success of such terrorism again depends on the creation of an atmosphere of fear, reinforced by the seeming omnipresence of the internal security or terrorist apparatus. Like other forms of terrorism, that aimed at enforcing obedience contains elements of deliberate drama: defectors are abducted or mysteriously assassinated, stories (often real) are spread of dungeons and torture. The objective is to frighten and alarm the target audience. In contrast to other forms of terrorism, however, terrorism for the purpose of enforcement seldom involves victims chosen at random, and the terrorists do not usually seek widespread publicity. It aims at the influence and control of its "own" population or organization.

THE ORIGINS OF CONTEMPORARY TERRORISM: BORN OF FAILURE

There are many hypotheses about the origins of contemporary terrorism, suggesting a variety of social, economic, political, and historical factors. However, no single cause has been identified for the increase in the use of terrorist tactics throughout the world that began in the late 1960s.

Terrorist tactics have generally been adopted when other modes of armed conflict or peaceful means to attain political goals have failed. By the late 1960s, it was clear that the rural guerrilla movements in Latin America inspired by the success of Fidel Castro and patterned on the Cuban model had failed. Leftist revolutionaries began to devote more attention to combat in the cities. Urban guerrilla warfare led almost automatically to the use of terrorist tactics. Rural guerrillas might win battles that nobody would ever hear about, but dramatic acts of violence in a major city win national, even international, attention. It was an easy step from killing or kidnapping local officials to killing or kidnapping foreign diplomats.

Meanwhile, frustrated by the failure of the Arab armies in 1967 and unable to wage guerrilla warfare in Israel, the Palestinians launched a global campaign of terrorism against Israel and its supporters. When hijacking airliners provoked worldwide outrage, the Palestinians turned

to seizing hostages at places like Munich, Bangkok, and Khartoum. Terrorist tactics were adopted by radical students in Europe, the United States, and Japan when the mass protest movements of the late 1960s failed to bring about the changes they sought.

But the rise and persistence of contemporary terrorism cannot be entirely explained by the unique political circumstances at the end of the 1960s. It was a confluence of political circumstances and technological developments that gave birth to modern terrorism. Today's terrorist tactics may be the same as those employed by terrorists a century ago, but technological progress has made them more effective.

Technological developments made international terrorism possible. Modern jet travel provides worldwide mobility, so that terrorists can now strike on any continent. Radio, television, and communications satellites provide almost instantaneous access to a global audience. Weapons and explosives are widely available. Modern industrial society presents many vulnerable targets, from airliners to nuclear reactors. Once the utility of terrorist tactics was demonstrated, terrorism became an imitative mode of behavior, spreading throughout the world.

TERRORIST TACTICS: A LIMITED REPERTOIRE

Terrorists operate with a limited tactical repertoire. Six basic terrorist tactics comprise 95 percent of all terrorist incidents: bombings, assassinations, armed assaults, kidnappings, barricade and hostage situations, and hijackings. No terrorist group uses all of them. Bombings, generally the least demanding of the tactics, predominate. Explosives are easy to obtain or manufacture, and a bombing requires little organization—one person can do the job, with little risk. Bombings alone account for roughly half of all international terrorist incidents.[8]

This tactical repertoire has changed little over time. Terrorists appear to be more imitative than innovative, although their tactics have changed in response to new defenses. For example, seizing embassies, a popular terrorist tactic in the 1970s, declined in the 1980s for several reasons. Nations began turning their embassies into virtual fortresses, making takeovers more difficult. Governments also changed

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[8]These and other statistics used in this report derive from Rand's Chronology of International Terrorism, 1968-present. Entries are textual abstracts taken from various open sources. There are presently approximately 3500 entries. It should be kept in mind that the statistical databases on terrorism maintained by various government agencies and private research organizations may vary according to collection criteria and procedures. The Rand database, therefore, may differ in the exact number from others, but comparison shows agreement on the overall patterns and trends.

their policies. Whereas they were initially inclined to yield to the demands of terrorists holding hostages, governments began to adopt hardline policies as terrorist kidnappings and hostage seizures continued. Officials refused to release prisoners (the most frequent terrorist demand) or make other serious concessions.

The Israeli government refused to offer concessions to the terrorists holding Israeli athletes hostage at the Munich Olympics in 1972. In 1973, the United States refused to yield to the demands of terrorists holding American diplomats in Khartoum. In 1975, the German government refused to yield to the demands of terrorists holding the German embassy in Stockholm, the Irish government refused to yield to the demands of the surrounded kidnappers of a Dutch businessman, the Dutch government refused to yield to terrorists who had seized the Indonesian consulate, and the British government refused to yield to the terrorists holding hostages in London. There were exceptions, of course; terrorists occasionally won concessions. But overall, the likelihood that their demands would be met declined almost 50 percent in the latter half of the 1970s.

Unwilling to make concessions or stand by and do nothing while terrorists shot hostages, governments increasingly resorted to force to end barricade and hostage episodes at home and abroad, using forces they had created for the task. In the wake of the 1972 Munich incident, which ended in a disastrous shootout and the deaths of all of the hostages, governments began to develop specialized hostage-rescue units.

The tide turned in the second half of the 1970s. In 1976, Israeli commandos successfully rescued hostages held at Entebbe Airport in Uganda. In 1977, German commandos successfully rescued passengers aboard a hijacked airliner in Mogadishu. That same year, Dutch commandos successfully stormed a hijacked train and a school both held by South Moluccan terrorists. In 1980, British commandos rescued hostages held in the Iranian embassy in London. Some of the rescue attempts failed, notably the American attempt to rescue U.S. hostages held in Iran. But the message was clear: Terrorists who barricaded themselves with hostages risked capture or death.

As security measures improved, the terrorists' chances of obtaining concessions declined, and the probability of their being captured or killed went up. Not surprisingly, seizing embassies declined as a terrorist tactic. At the same time, however, terrorist attacks in general, and attacks on diplomats in particular, increased. Terrorists merely changed their tactics, turning to assassinations and bombings.

This ability to switch tactics is a major reason why defending against terrorism is so difficult. Security measures can protect one set of targets against one type of attack, but terrorists can alter their

tactics or shift their sights to other targets, obviating rather than overcoming the security measures, thus requiring new security measures to be devised. Unfortunately, the situation is asymmetrical. Unlike regular soldiers, terrorists do not have to attack at a certain time and place. Since many possible targets will satisfy their political needs, terrorists can strike practically anything or anyone they decide is a suitable target; they can attack almost anywhere, at any time. Because of limitations on resources, however, and because they prefer not to become garrison states, governments cannot protect everything, everywhere, all the time. This asymmetry also means an inequality of effort between terrorist attackers and antiterrorist defenders. The amount of resources required for defense against terrorism is determined not by the very small number of the terrorists, but rather by the virtually unlimited number of targets to be defended. This makes terrorism a cheap way to fight and a costly kind of threat to defend against.

TERRORIST TARGETS: NO BYSTANDERS

Terrorists may target anything that symbolizes a government, ethnic group, ideology, economic system, policy, or point of view they oppose. Diplomats and embassies occupy the front line in international terrorism, but the spectrum of terrorist targets has expanded steadily over the years.

Terrorists have hijacked airliners and trains. They have kidnapped archeologists and nuns. They have murdered soldiers and priests. They have blown up pipelines and nightclubs, restaurants and refineries, department stores and dance troupes, mailboxes, synagogues, churches, and computers.

Terrorists usually attack civilian targets, but they also have assassinated military attachés, shot at ROTC instructors, kidnapped generals and airmen, and detonated bombs at military headquarters, officers' clubs, and recruiting centers.

A handful of nations suffer a disproportionate share of terrorist attacks. Five nations comprise the targets in half of all international terrorist attacks. Although terrorism represents only a minor problem in the United States, U.S. citizens and facilities abroad are frequent terrorist targets. More than 30 percent of all international terrorist attacks are directed against Americans. France, Israel, the United Kingdom, and Turkey, whose diplomats have been the targets of

Armenian terrorists in recent years, make up the remainder of the top five.[9]

Many people think that communist countries are immune to terrorist violence, but this is not so. While it is true that very little terrorism takes place in the Soviet Union or other East European countries whose populations are strictly controlled by the government, three communist countries—the Soviet Union, Cuba, and Yugoslavia (which is not part of the Soviet bloc)—are among the ten most frequently targeted nations. Soviet diplomats have been the targets of both Jewish and Moslem extremists (in incidents not related to the war in Afghanistan) as well as right-wing fanatics. Anti-Castro Cuban émigrés in the United States and the Caribbean have attacked Cuban diplomats and the representatives of governments or companies doing business with Cuba. Croatian separatists living abroad have long waged war against Yugoslav diplomats. But although both are in the top ten, the United States suffers ten times more terrorist attacks than the Soviet Union.[10]

There are many reasons for this. Neither end of the ideological spectrum has a monopoly on the use of terrorist tactics, but groups espousing some form of Marxist ideology clearly outnumber all other terrorist organizations, thus making the United States, as the principal capitalist power, a prime target. Terrorists also tend to overestimate the amount of influence that the United States can exercise over local governments, and therefore they overestimate the leverage they can gain by targeting Americans. The widespread political and economic presence and pervasive cultural influence of the United States is another reason for the frequency of attacks on U.S. targets. It is difficult to find a country without American diplomats, American businessmen, American missionaries, American reporters, or at least American tourists.

TERRORIST OPERATIONS: TARGET SELECTION

Living clandestinely, deprived of ordinary pursuits, terrorists spend a tremendous amount of time planning operations. We know from material discovered at terrorist hideouts and from the testimony of terrorists themselves that they devote considerable attention to target selection. It appears to be a two-phase process. First, potential targets are identified as being politically suitable: A particular government, organization, institution, company, or individual is identified as "guilty"—a foe of the terrorists or their perceived constituency, whose

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[9] Statistics taken from the Rand Chronology of International Terrorism.
[10] Op. cit.

"punishment" will be popular—or simply as a lucrative target worth a large ransom.

Terrorism applies broader connotations to the concepts of guilt and punishment than do other forms of warfare or politics, and consequently narrows the definition of "innocent" bystanders. To terrorists, there are few innocent bystanders. An individual may be "guilty" and hence an appropriate target simply because of his organization, employment, or ethnic identity. The Italian terrorists considered Brigadier General James Dozier guilty because he was an "imperialist general." Leamon Hunt, an American diplomat assassinated by Red Brigades terrorists in 1984, was an appropriate target because he directed the Sinai Peace Commission. An extreme expression of this concept is the phrase, once popular with left-wing extremists, "If you're not part of the solution, you're part of the problem," implying that anybody not actively assisting the terrorists is a fair target for their violence. "In today's world, no one is innocent, no one is neutral," warned Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) leader George Habbash. "A man is either with the oppressed or he is with the oppressors. He who takes no interest in politics gives his blessing to the prevailing order, that of the ruling classes and exploiting forces."

Even the victims of the Lod Airport massacre in 1972, many of whom happened to be Christian pilgrims from Puerto Rico, were said by the Palestinian organization responsible for the attack to be "guilty" because they had arrived in Israel on Israeli visas and thereby had tacitly recognized the state that was the declared enemy of the Palestinians, and because by coming to Israel they had also entered what was in effect a war zone. One terrorist leader put it succinctly: "There are no innocent tourists in Israel."

This rationalization for the Lod killings is an example, not atypical, of terrorists declaring their victims guilty after the fact. The PFLP, which employed the three Japanese terrorists who carried out the Lod Airport attack, was not saying that the victims were innocent bystanders unfortunately caught in a crossfire; neither was it saying that it would seek and kill all those holding visas from Israel. The organization was saying that those who happened to get shot simply because they happened to be there at the wrong moment were nevertheless guilty; otherwise they would not have been there to be shot.

The second phase of the target selection process is an assessment of operational feasibility. Terrorists examine each of their suitable targets to identify the one that is most vulnerable. This involves gathering extensive information. They case buildings, conduct lengthy surveillance operations, and attempt to obtain additional details from

inside confederates. Their work in this area is good, sometimes even unnecessarily meticulous, indicating that they have time on their hands and that they derive satisfaction from endless preparations for operations, many of which are never carried out. Terrorist hideouts are filled with feasibility studies and detailed plans for attacks that never occurred. Since terrorists are concerned with never failing, they seek operations that pose minimum risk.

Although this elaborate process appears to be the usual mode of operation, target selection can sometimes be quite casual, even whimsical. An American terrorist responsible for a series of bombings in the early 1970s returned home to tell his comrades that he had just planted a bomb at the Marine Midlands Bank. Since the group had not discussed this particular bank as a possible target, nor was it part of the litany of leftist enemies, his choice caused puzzlement and consternation. Why had he chosen Marine Midlands? "No particular reason. I just walked around Wall Street until I found a likely looking place. It's one of those big new skyscrapers, millions of dollars of glass and steel. . . . You just look at the building and the people going in and out of it, and you know."[11]

Asked why he chose a particular bank to destroy, another American radical replied, "Well, *this* Bank of America represented to me the same thing every Bank of America does. It's essentially the Bank of America which has its hand in everything all over the world. . . . It was also an ugly building. Aesthetically, it was ugly. That thing was so . . . ugly, it had to go anyway."[12]

Whether a target is chosen as the result of thorough research or individual prejudice, one factor outweighs all others: The fundamental criterion is that the target not be defended by armed persons. This may explain why terrorists have rarely carried out attacks at military installations. They have, however, managed to avoid detection by guards and have planted bombs at military headquarters. Terrorists also have shot armed bodyguards in order to kidnap protected persons, and suicide terrorist bombers in the Middle East have crashed into military installations, heedless of armed sentries.

In response to the increased security surrounding facilities that are possible targets of terrorist attack, terrorists have turned to softer targets, namely, people. The increased proportion of terrorist attacks directed against persons rather than property also reflects the growing willingness of terrorists to kill.

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[11]Jane Alpert, *Growing Up Underground*, William Morrow and Company, Inc., New York, 1981.

[12]"The student who burned down the Bank of America," *Scanlon's*, January 1971, p. 21.

Those charged with security responsibilities must now consider not only the security of the installation but also the personal security of all the individuals associated with it. Terrorists can achieve the same political ends by attacking a person as by attacking an institution. For example, Basque separatists in Spain, determined to halt construction on a nuclear power station, first concentrated their efforts on smuggling bombs into the construction site. When increased security made this more difficult, the terrorists switched to attacks on personnel, kidnapping and murdering the plant's chief engineer, assassinating the director of the plant, and thieatening to kill any other member of the senior staff who went to the site. These actions effectively halted construction.

TRENDS IN TERRORISM: A PARADOX

In reviewing terrorist incidents that occurred during the 1970s and 1980s, one immediately confronts a paradox. Despite the increasing effectiveness of governments in combatting terrorists, the total volume of terrorism has increased.

Governments that were ill-prepared and uncertain about how to confront the terrorist threat in the early 1970s have become more rigorous *and* more effective in combatting terrorist elements. Few governments are as inclined as they were ten years ago to release captured terrorists simply to avoid further terrorist attacks. Most governments have adopted no-concessions, no-negotiations policies in dealing with hostage situations. Physical security around likely targets has increased. For example, it has become more difficult now, although it is still possible, to smuggle weapons aboard airliners. Embassies are becoming virtual fortresses. Diplomats and top executives often travel in armored limousines with armed bodyguards. The collection and analysis of intelligence has improved, and behavioral research has increased our knowledge of the terrorist mindset. Governments have skillfully used conditional pardons or amnesties to induce at least some terrorists to provide information about their comrades at large. International cooperation has progressed.

As a result of these achievements, thousands of terrorists are in jail. Some groups have been virtually destroyed, and others are hard-pressed by authorities and are beginning to show the strains of a long struggle. Some terrorists, in despair, have dropped out of the movement. Others have defected.

But despite these undeniable achievements, the total volume of terrorist activity in the world has increased. Figures vary according to the

source of information, collection criteria, and procedures, but the trajectory of terrorism continues upward.

At the same time, terrorism has become bloodier. Since 1977, the number of international terrorist incidents resulting in fatalities has increased each year. Terrorists seem to be less and less reluctant to inflict casualties. A more alarming trend in the 1980s is the growing number of large-scale terrorist attacks—car bombs, bombings in public places like railroad stations and airport terminals, bombs planted aboard trains—in which the victims are not identified beforehand but are people who just happen to be in the wrong place at the wrong time.

As a result of their own success, governments face new problems in the 1980s. They fear that terrorists in prison may create a new generation of terrorists, or at least politicized criminals there. The imprisoned terrorists write manifestos, proselytize among other prisoners, go on hunger strikes, and undertake various activities to continue their struggle. Not a few of them find ways to maintain communications with their comrades on the outside, sometimes even directing their actions. Many of those jailed in the early 1970s are nearing the end of their sentences; some remain committed to the struggle. Will they go back into terrorism upon release?

STATE-SPONSORED TERRORISM: A NEW MODE OF CONFLICT

Another disturbing trend is state sponsorship of terrorism. A growing number of governments are using terrorist tactics themselves or employing terrorist groups as a mode of surrogate warfare. These governments see in terrorism a useful capability, a "weapons system," a cheap means of waging war against domestic foes or another nation rather than against a political or social structure. Terrorists offer a possible alternative to open, interstate armed conflict. Modern conventional war is increasingly impractical—it is destructive, it is expensive, and it is dangerous. World, and sometimes domestic, opinion imposes constraints. Some nations that are unable to mount a conventional military challenge see terrorism as the only alternative: an "equalizer."

Growing state sponsorship of terrorism has serious consequences. It puts more resources in the hands of the terrorists: money, sanctuary, sophisticated munitions, intelligence, and technical expertise. It also reduces the constraints on them, permitting them to contemplate large-scale operations without worrying so much about alienating their perceived constituents or provoking public backlash, since they need not depend on the local population for support.

Without the need to finance themselves through bank robberies or ransom kidnappings, and without the need to carry out operations just to maintain group cohesion, state-sponsored terrorist groups operate less frequently than groups that receive little or no state support, but they are many times more lethal and have far greater operational reach.

Middle Eastern groups like Black June (*Al-Assifa*), which has carried out assassinations in Western Europe, the Middle East, and Asia, and Islamic Jihad, the Shi'ite Moslem extremist group that claimed credit for the suicide bombings of the American and French embassies in Beirut and Kuwait and the U.S. Marine barracks, fall under the heading of state-sponsored groups. The 1983 bombing that killed 17 South Korean officials in Rangoon was an example of a country, in this case North Korea, sending its own agents to assassinate another country's leaders.

We may be on the threshold of an era of armed conflict in which limited conventional warfare, guerrilla warfare, and international terrorism will coexist, with governments and subnational entities employing them individually, interchangeably, sequentially, or simultaneously—and having to defend against them.

Warfare in the future may be less destructive than that in the first half of the twentieth century, but it may also be less coherent. Warfare will cease to be finite. The distinction between war and peace will become more ambiguous and complex. Armed conflict will not be confined by national frontiers. Local belligerents will mobilize foreign patrons. Terrorists will attack foreign targets both at home and abroad. It will be necessary to develop capabilities to deal with—if not wage—all three modes of armed conflict, *perhaps simultaneously.*[13]

THE EFFECTS OF TERRORISM

Compared with the volume of violence in the world caused by war and ordinary crime, the volume of violence caused by terrorists is miniscule. Victims of international terrorism number in the thousands. Adding the victims of local terrorism in places like Argentina and Northern Ireland pushes the total into the tens of thousands. Without minimizing the tragedy of these casualties, we must keep in mind that in the United States alone, nearly 200,000 people were murdered during the last ten years; that several million people have died in wars fought since we began tallying the statistics of terrorism; that 60 million

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[13]See Brian M. Jenkins, *New Modes of Conflict*, The Rand Corporation, R-3009-DNA, June 1983.

people—soldiers and civilians—died in the two world wars fought during the first half of this century, a ghastly figure that would be quickly exceeded in a major exchange of nuclear weapons. When it comes to slaughter, the "civilized" nations of the world can do it on a grand scale.

Terrorism, however, is not measured by body counts or property damage, but rather by its psychological effects and its political results. What effects have terrorists produced? Does terrorism work?

Small groups with a limited capacity for violence have shown that they can achieve disproportionately great effects by using terrorist tactics. Terrorists have been able to attract attention to themselves and their causes. They have captured headlines and television time. By this measure alone, they are successful. But they have not been successful in explaining their causes. Terrorism attracts intense interest but produces little understanding. News coverage focuses on action, not words. Terrorist incidents attract the media because they are genuine human dramas, different from ordinary murder and therefore newsworthy. But terrorists lose their audience when they put down their guns and start to talk. The causes they kill and die for are drowned out by sirens, obscured by floodlights, hidden behind the opaque prose to which terrorists seem addicted.

Terrorists certainly have been able to create fear and alarm. It is hard to gauge the intensity of these effects or how long they last, but it appears that people do not easily remain terrorized. In Belfast, in Bogota, in Beirut, terrorism is "lived with."

Repeated coverage of terrorist incidents in the news seems to lessen their effect on people not living under the gun, ultimately numbing the public and forcing terrorists to escalate their violence in order to get public reaction: shock, outrage, alarm, fear, panic, disorder.

Terrorism can alter people's perceptions of their government. Terrorists create dramas in which they and their victims are the central figures. Except for the occasional successful commando rescue, governments seldom get to play the role of the hero. More often, governments are seen as reactive, incompetent, or impotent. Intelligence has failed or security has been demonstrably breached. If the government is unable to satisfy the public's appetite for action, the people's wrath turns against the government itself, demanding the heads of those officials who failed to anticipate the attack or who took inadequate measures to defend against it. We saw some of this type of reaction immediately after the 1983 bombing of the American Marine barracks in Beirut.

Where the terrorist violence is not directed against targets abroad but rather threatens the public at home, the reactions are more

powerful. An alarmed public demands prompt government action to remove the threat at whatever cost. Political leaders find themselves under pressure to adopt draconian measures. There is danger of over-reaction. For some governments where the terrorist threat is great and traditions are weak, the temptation to repression may become irresistible. Underreaction also has negative consequences; it can erode the people's faith in government institutions and can lead to vigilantism or the formation of private counterterrorist groups.

Thus far, however, terrorists have been unable to translate these consequences of terrorism into concrete political gains. Nowhere this side of the colonial era have terrorists yet achieved their own stated long-range goals, and in that sense, terrorism has failed. No doubt terrorism did contribute to the success of colonial insurgents a generation ago. But the stakes are higher at home. Governments are not so willing to abandon what is regarded as national territory—Northern Ireland, the Basque Provinces, or Corsica—even if it means a fight. Nor will they yield before the onslaught of ideologically motivated terrorists of the left or right.

Terrorists have been able in a few cases to provoke government repression, but not with the desired effect. Where democratic traditions have strong roots, governments have cautiously enacted antiterrorist legislation to limit certain liberties. Where democratic traditions are weaker, governments have resorted to repressive measures. These, however, have failed to arouse the masses to join the resistance. Where terrorism has provoked military takeovers, it has usually led to harsh crackdowns which the terrorists did not survive.

State sponsorship has altered the equation somewhat. Here, terrorism has been used not to alter political systems, but to intimidate domestic foes or affect specific policies pursued by other countries. In several instances, state-sponsored terrorism has achieved a degree of success.

ESCALATION: HOW FAR?

How far will terrorists go? Will they turn to chemical or biological weapons to cause mass casualties? Will terrorists go nuclear? To address these questions, we must keep in mind that terrorism is a means to an end, not an end in itself. That end is not simply to kill a lot of people. Terrorists want a lot of people *watching*, not a lot of people *dead*. Their ultimate goal is to attain the political aims encompassed by their "cause."

Most terrorists adhere to the principle of the "minimum force necessary," that is, they try to apply just enough violence to achieve their tactical objectives—to be heard, to frighten, to persuade—without alienating perceived constituents, provoking too much public revulsion, or unleashing a government reaction that they may not survive. It is a peculiar characteristic of the terrorist mindset that violence is regarded as something that can be predetermined and precisely regulated.

The principle of the minimum force necessary takes on considerable importance in the issue of whether terrorists might eventually employ weapons of mass destruction. Obviously, they could do more than they have done, yet they do not. One constraint arises from the technical difficulties involved in the use of certain weapons, but terrorists also seem to operate under self-imposed constraints—moral and political— that limit their violence. The casual observer may bristle at the statement that terrorists are guided by moral considerations, but it is true, even though their morality is radically different. Most terrorist groups regard government authority, not "the people," as their enemy.

This perception varies from group to group. Left-wing terrorists in the United States have taken precautions to ensure that their bombs did not harm innocent bystanders. When one explosion shattered windows in an apartment building, the group responsible sent each occupant of the building a letter of apology and a check to replace the broken glass. But George Habbash argues that there are no innocent bystanders, and neo-fascist terrorists in Italy see utility in indiscriminate violence, or *pure terrorism*. They have set off bombs at public gatherings, in railroad stations, and aboard speeding trains in what seem to be attempts to cause the maximum number of casualties. Such random violence creates the most alarm and is the most difficult to protect against. In their blurred strategy, the neo-fascists see random violence as the way to provoke social chaos, a modern Armageddon from which will arise the strong leader who will impose his order on the unruly masses. At the very least, the fear and hysteria created by indiscriminate attacks, like the 1980 Bologna train station bombing which killed 84 people and injured 200, can be expected to set off a clamor by the populace that will compel the government to exert a strong hand, which is what the neo-fascists want.

The desire to appear legal, to act as a "government," also constrains terrorists. They cannot appear to kill wantonly, as if they derived satisfaction from the bloodshed. In their view, terrorism should be applied coldly, with justification, and according to rules.

Terrorists fear alienating the perceived constituents on whose behalf they claim to fight. They may, in fact, have no constituents, but they imagine themselves to have legions of supporters and potential

supporters. They also view themselves as being at the fighting edge of their supporters, having crossed the line into violence, possessing the stomach for a fight. They see their supporters as politically well-meaning, but squeamish. The right amount of violence will inspire and educate them. Too much will turn them off.

Terrorists fear provoking widespread public revulsion because that can be exploited by the government and used against them. An apparent contradiction emerges here: Terrorists want to provoke repression, which they believe will send the repressed into their arms, but they don't want to unleash a government crackdown that may destroy the organization. The solution again is the right amount of violence—just enough to provoke repression, not enough to give the government's repressive measures popular support. However—and this is crucial—this does not apply to state-sponsored varieties of terrorism. Here, whatever restraints exist are on the *sponsor*.

Terrorist operations must achieve a certain degree of consensus among the members of the group. Former terrorists have indicated in interviews that each escalation in violence provokes debate and some dissension within their ranks. Those who have the most doubts drop out, defect, or are shoved aside by the more ruthless. Eventually, the more violently inclined dominate.

An important element in the Middle East is the religious factor. As we have seen, the sanction of God permits acts of great destruction and self-destruction. Moreover, a foe that represents a different religious or ethnic group can more easily be dehumanized by the terrorist psychology and *internal* propaganda, encouraging terrorists who are religious zealots to cross the threshold into mass murder.

The perception that current tactics are not working pushes terrorists toward both tactical improvements and escalation. The perception that their cause is hopeless or lost could even provoke a desperate but determined group to contemplate a doomsday finale. However, this is not likely, because terrorist groups—as distinguished from some terrorist individuals—typically *never* give up. The Red Army Faction in West Germany, with only 20 to 30 members, at war with the superbly organized West German state and its huge police forces, deprived of its leaders by arrest or death twice in a generation, and presumed dead by many, reemerged in 1985 with a flawlessly executed, pinpoint murder of a weapons manufacturer. And it was by no means a suicide mission.[14]

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[14] On February 1, 1985, Ernst Zimmerman, chairman of the West German firm that makes engines for NATO's Tornado Jets, was murdered. A few hours later, an anonymous caller said Zimmerman had been killed by the Red Army Faction.

THE TERRORIST THREAT TO THE UNITED STATES

The United States faces two problems in combatting terrorism abroad. The first is that of defending against the diverse terrorist groups outside U.S. borders who have attacked American targets in 72 countries since 1968. The location of the principal threats has shifted with time, roughly reflecting the course of political violence in the world. In the early 1970s, Americans faced the greatest peril in South America. In the early 1980s, the greatest threat came from terrorists in the Middle East. Recently, the action has shifted to Western Europe. Local governments where these attacks have occurred generally have cooperated in trying to protect foreign nationals and have vigorously pursued local terrorists. By contrast, the U.S. posture has been primarily defensive, based upon intelligence and security measures.

State-sponsored terrorism poses a second (and often related) problem. Here, acts of terrorism are instigated and supported by a handful of state sponsors. Right now, these state sponsors are concentrated in the Middle East, but they may well include other countries in the future. Combatting state-sponsored terrorism requires not only increased defenses, but also active measures, possibly including the use of military force.

The intense public debate in this country that followed the bombing of the Marine headquarters in Beirut was only partially resolved on April 3, 1984, when the President signed a new National Security Directive dealing with terrorism and when, on the same day, the Secretary of State delivered a major foreign policy address on the subject of terrorism The Secretary described state-sponsored terrorism as a new form of warfare and stated that the United States must be prepared to use force in response, a theme he echoed in subsequent speeches on the topic. He and others, however, have publicly pointed out some of the political and operational constraints which impede the employment of military force: the lack of adequate intelligence, the difficulty of proving state sponsorship, the lack of lucrative targets for attack, the chances of highly visible failure, the possibility of casualties among innocent civilians, the poor prospects of persuading fanatic governments to desist, the probability of retaliation.

With some justification, military leaders view the armed forces as a poor instrument for the task of combatting terrorism, a task fraught with operational and institutional risks. There is a concern within the armed forces that military missions to combat terrorism could turn into the kind of ambiguous or unwinnable long-term involvements that are highly unpopular at home. However, if terrorist provocations

continue, it becomes increasingly likely that the United States will be compelled to respond with military power.

THE CHALLENGE FOR THE U.S. MILITARY

Terrorism poses specific challenges for the military services. First, the services have a requirement to protect their own personnel, equipment, and facilities against terrorist attacks. Second, it may become necessary to direct military operations against terrorists or state sponsors of terrorism.

Approximately 20 percent of the terrorist attacks against the United States are directed at the U.S. military.[15] American military personnel—military attachés, members of advisory missions, those serving in NATO posts—have been the targets of assassins in Brazil, Guatemala, Honduras, the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, Iran, Lebanon, Turkey, Ethiopia, Greece, Germany, France, and Belgium. American military personnel have been kidnapped in Venezuela, Turkey, and Italy. And American military installations have been bombed in Puerto Rico, Greece, Belgium, Turkey, Germany, Italy, and Lebanon.

American military personnel and American military facilities make good terrorist targets, for a variety of reasons. They are available throughout most of the world, particularly in the European countries that have suffered high levels of terrorist activity. Moreover, military personnel are easily identified. In the eyes of the terrorists, they symbolize American imperialism, foreign occupation, or particular policies opposed by the terrorists: the war in Vietnam, U.S. involvement in Central America or the Middle East, the deployment of new nuclear weapons. And terrorists may claim a certain legitimacy in attacking military targets, even if it means gunning down an unarmed man or blowing up a mess hall. Such attacks may verify the terrorists' self-image as military organizations engaged in war and may even lead them to try to claim soldiers' status under the rules of war.

Increased security is obviously necessary, but the U.S. military cannot rely entirely on physical measures to defend against terrorist attack. Such measures are costly, they are of limited effectiveness, and they provide a false sense of security. Terrorists have demonstrated that they can penetrate base perimeters by deception or disguise. For example, they detonated a powerful bomb in the parking lot in front of USAFE Headquarters at Ramstein AFB. With a wide range of

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[15]Data from the Rand Chronology of International Terrorism.

potential targets, terrorists can generally find something that is unprotected. In recent years, they have increasingly concentrated their attacks on personnel. Terrorists seeking a military target thus need only to find a vulnerable member of the armed forces.

Nor can security be consigned entirely to those charged with formal security responsibilities. Every member of the armed forces may be a terrorist target; therefore, every member must participate in the task of security. The first line of defense against an elusive foe is awareness of the threat, an understanding of the adversary's methods, and a constant state of readiness. This need not induce a siege mentality. In most places, the threat posed by terrorists is quite small. Where it exists, vulnerability can be reduced by remaining alert to the potential threat and taking simple, regular precautions.

COMBATTING TERRORISM WITH MILITARY FORCE

The bombing of the U.S. Marine headquarters in Beirut on October 23, 1983, dramatically transformed American perceptions of the problem of international terrorism. It was not simply the colossal size of the bomb, although explosives experts said it was the largest nonnuclear explosion they had ever seen. It was not simply the casualties, although they rendered the bombing the deadliest incident in the annals of international terrorism to that date. Nor was it simply that high-ranking military officials were publicly rebuked for neglecting their command responsibilities with regard to security.

Much more than that, the attack clearly demonstrated how governments could effectively use terrorism to achieve their goals. It provoked an intense debate in the United States, it curtailed the deployment of the U.S. Marines in Lebanon, it fatally wounded the Multinational Force that had been dispatched to maintain a degree of peace in that country, and it undermined U.S. policy in the Middle East. Moreover, the bombing demonstrated American vulnerability to this form of attack.

In his speech of April 3, 1984, the Secretary of State concluded that "purely passive strategy cannot even begin to cope with the problem." The United States, he said, needs "*an active defense*," including the use of force.

Military operations might be considered in cases where the United States has incontrovertible evidence that agents in the employ of a foreign government have carried out a terrorist attack, that a government has instigated a terrorist attack or permitted one to occur through willful negligence, or that a government is able to bring the

perpetrators to justice but refuses to do so. Military operations could be aimed at limiting a terrorist group's ability to operate, persuading governments sponsoring terrorism to desist, demonstrating to other governments that the United States is not impotent, and that sponsoring terrorism does have costs.

Implementing such a policy obviously is not easy. Who or what do we attack? Terrorist groups field no regular armies. They seldom hold territory. They have no regular economy. Sometimes they have headquarters or training camps at known locations, but these are frequently in the midst of population centers. More often, we are uncertain of their whereabouts. In sum, terrorists provide few lucrative targets for conventional military attack. Attacking their state sponsors instead offers a wider range of vulnerable targets where it may be easier to avoid innocent civilian casualties. The difficulty is that it is necessary to have proof of the connection between the terrorist perpetrator and the state sponsor to justify the action.

Counterterrorist operations could involve the use of air power in either of two roles: rescue or retaliation. Operations to rescue hostages, such as the successful mission by the Israelis at Entebbe Airport in 1976 or the aborted attempt by the United States to rescue Americans held hostage at the U.S. embassy in Teheran in 1980, would most likely involve the Air Force's Special Operations assets. A retaliatory mission may entail either special or conventional operations but with some politically important operational requirements.

The need for precise target identification and designation would place extraordinary demands on intelligence. Unless retaliatory operations were preceded by some declaration of belligerent status, the need for surprise probably would preclude the visible buildup of forces, the establishment of advance bases, or obvious deviations from normal flight patterns and frequencies prior to the attack. The emphasis would be on a single, successful mission rather than sustained combat operations. The crucial requirement to minimize casualties among civilian bystanders would require the use of precision ammunition. The need to avoid a POW situation might require the presence of an immediate rescue capability. And finally, psychological operations, including highly visible overflights or low-altitude bombing runs in which no ordnance is dropped, may accompany or replace actual attacks.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The U.S. military constitutes perhaps the most conspicuous and exposed U.S. target for international terrorism, due to its worldwide presence. It is perhaps also the most attractive target. In the war of terrorism, past doctrines, training, and practices do not apply. On the other hand, we are not defenseless against terrorist attacks. They are not, nor are they ever likely to be, seriously incapacitating, no matter how costly or painful they may be. Terrorists can always inflict damage, but they cannot "win" unless they manage to throw their target into a state of hysteria, where all antiterrorist capabilities cease to exist. Despite their mobility, their fanaticism, their advantage of surprise, and their emotional impact, terrorists do not have the capability to inflict crippling damage on the U.S. military, no matter how serious and vexing a problem they represent.

If, as we have suggested, armed conflict in the future includes varying combinations of limited conventional combat, classic guerrilla warfare fought with advanced weaponry, and international terrorism as it has developed over the past several years, however, the U.S. military will have to develop new capabilities and new doctrines to meet the challenge.

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